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RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC  
RHEFHLC/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHINGTON DC  
RHMFISS/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 001022

SIPDIS  
ISN/WMDT FOR CURRY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/25/2019  
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [KCRM](#) [NKKP](#) [MUNC](#) [PARM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [GM](#)  
RU, IN  
SUBJECT: GERMANY INQUIRES ABOUT RADIOACTIVE COBALT-60  
CONTAMINATED STAINLESS STEEL

REF: A. STATE 79035  
[1](#)B. BARBIAN (BERLIN) - CURRY (ISN/WMDT) EMAILS

Classified By: Global Affairs Unit Chief Don L. Brown, for reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request, please see para. 4.

[1](#)2. (C) Summary: German MFA contacts have asked the U.S. to provide information regarding the reported import by the U.S. of radioactive cobalt-60 contaminated stainless steel. Open source reporting indicated this material may have been used in hand-held consumer cheese slicers. End Summary.

[1](#)3. (C) While discussing Econoff's request for German information regarding a German import of highly enriched uranium-contaminated steel (Reftel A), German MFA desk officer Joerg Polster said that the German Ministry of the Environment (BMU) was looking into the case but would appreciate a "bit more give and take" with the U.S. on these issues and raised a new import case with Econoff. Specifically, Polster said, Germany had imported industrial-use stainless steel from India or China which was found to be contaminated with cobalt-60. Polster then also cited 2009 open source media reports claiming that the U.S. had also imported radioactive stainless steel, perhaps from China or India, but that the steel the U.S. imported was used in consumer goods such as cheese slicers.

[1](#)4. (C) Speaking for the BMU, Polster asked for the following information from the U.S. regarding this steel:  
-- Can the U.S. confirm the radioactive steel import or imports took place?  
-- Can the U.S. provide information regarding how much steel was involved and its level of radioactive contamination?  
-- Can the U.S. confirm the steel's country of origin, and, more specifically, identify the foundry whence the steel came?

[1](#)5. (C) Post appreciates Washington's assistance in this matter.

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